



INTEGRITY AGENCIES GROUP

DRAFT MINUTES

Friday 9 August 2024 | 10:00am – 11:30am | Wiradjuri Room, Treasury Building

Attendees

<i>In person:</i>	
Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM	Australian Public Service Commissioner (Chair)
Ms Katherine Jones PSM	Secretary, Attorney-General's Department
Ms Rona Mellor PSM	Acting Auditor-General
The Hon Paul Brereton AM RFD SC	National Anti-Corruption Commissioner
Mr Iain Anderson	Commonwealth Ombudsman
Mr Reece Kershaw APM	Australian Federal Police Commissioner
Ms Nicole Pearson	Acting CEO, Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
Ms Heather Cook	CEO, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
Ms Raelene Sharp KC	Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions
Mr Mark Davidson	Merit Protection Commissioner
The Hon Troy Grant	Inspector-General of Water Compliance
Ms Angelene Falk	Australian Information Commissioner
<i>Via Microsoft Teams:</i>	
Ms Ruth Owen CBE	Inspector-General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman
Ms Leanne Smith	CEO, Australian Human Rights Commission

Secretariat:

Ms Clare McLean

Director, Integrity and Ethics, Australian Public Service Commission



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Service Commission

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Graduate, Integrity and Ethics, Australian Public Service Commission.

Apologies:

Mr Martin Hehir PSM

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Dr Rachel Bacon

Deputy Commissioner, Integrity, Reform and Enabling Services, Australian Public Service Commission

Item 1 – Welcome from Chair, and minutes and action items from previous meeting

- 1.1 The Chair provided an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed members to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair recognised that Ms Falk's term as Australian Information Commissioner was concluding; noted her achievements in the role, and expressed thanks for her contribution to IAG.
- 1.3 The Chair recognised and thanked Ms Mellor as outgoing acting Auditor General.
- 1.4 The Chair noted first meeting for Ms Sharp as Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.
- 1.5 Members introduced themselves and the Chair noted the apologies.
- 1.6 Members endorsed the IAG Meeting minutes from 2 May 2024.

Item 2 – Update: National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC)

- 2.1 Commissioner Brereton presented an overview of the operations of the NACC since the last IAG meeting, including an update on its previous action item - the integrity data project.
- 2.2 Commissioner Brereton reflected on the recent Australian Public Service Anti-Corruption Conference, and confirmed that NACC will host the 2026 conference in Canberra.
- 2.3 The Group discussed Commissioner Brereton's presentation, including the details of the Commonwealth Integrity Survey 2024 and complaints handling.



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Item 3 – Update: Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)

- 3.1 Ms Mellor noted that new Auditor General, Dr Caralee McLeish, will commence her term in November 2024.
- 3.2 Ms Mellor shared recent areas of attention for the ANAO and recent audit findings.
- 3.3 Group members discussed Ms Mellor's presentation, particularly in regards to uplifting procurement and contract management in agencies. The Chair noted that the procurement profession is currently being established.

Item 4– Update: Commonwealth Ombudsman (agenda change)

- 4.1 Mr Anderson presented an overview of recent observations and insights of the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman including the risks associated with agencies not adequately reflecting changes to the law in their decision-making procedures or responding effectively to tribunal and court decisions concerning the operation of their programs.
- 4.2 Group members discussed Mr Anderson's presentation. Secretary Jones noted that the new Administrative Review Tribunal framework will seek to address agency responsiveness to tribunal and court decisions.

Item 5 – Update: Australian Public Service Commission (APSC)

- 5.1 Ms McLean gave an overview of the APSC's program of work in the areas of integrity and APS reform. Members discussed this program of work, particularly the introduction of Stewardship as a new APS value.
- 5.2 The Chair invited IAG members to engage with forthcoming APS Reform Office issues paper on the extension of APS Values to all entities subject to the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

Item 6 – Update: Merit Protection Commission

- 6.1 Mr Davidson presented an overview of the operations of the Office of the Merit Protection Commissioner and recent observations and insights including the current themes of merit reviews, the use of external investigators for Code inquiries and the MPC's educative focus on good decision-making.
- 6.2 Group members discussed Mr Davidson's presentation and acknowledged the shortage of suitably skilled in-house code of conduct investigators across the APS.

Item 7 – Strategic Discussion: Transparency of Integrity Activities

- 7.1 The Chair noted that time constraints would not allow for this discussion to occur at the August meeting.



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Item 8 – Other Business

- 8.1 Secretary Jones gave an overview, as chair of the Capability and Workforce sub-committee of Secretaries Board, of its current policy development work on building psychological safety in the workplace. Secretary Jones indicated further engagement with IAG members on this work will be critical and undertook to provide a summary of the outcomes of the sub-committee's presentation on this work to Secretaries Board.



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Appendix 1

ACTIONS

Item	Action	Members(s)	Completed
1	Invite ANAO and NACC to future SES professional stream working group meeting/s to share relevant observations	APSC	Ongoing
2	Secretary Jones to update IAG members on 'building psychological safety' work of Capability and Workforce sub-committee of Secretaries Board	AGD	Item scheduled for 12 Nov meeting
3	Defer Strategic Discussion (Item 7) 'Transparency of Integrity Activities' to next IAG meeting	APSC	Item scheduled for 12 Nov meeting



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Appendix 2

Meeting summary for publication on APSC website

Meeting date: 9 August 2024

At the 9 August 2024 Integrity Agencies Group meeting, the Group discussed:

- An update from the National Anti-Corruption Commissioner on the Commission's operations.
- Updates from the Acting Auditor-General, Commonwealth Ombudsman and the Acting Merit Protection Commissioner on their agencies' recent findings regarding integrity in Commonwealth agencies